



Australian Bureau of Statistics

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NSW - highest housing costs, slowest growth, says ABS snapshot

New South Wales has the highest housing costs while its economy has been growing more slowly than Australia's, according to an annual snapshot of the state released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

The ABS found that in 2005-06, first home buyers in NSW were spending 29% of their gross income on housing costs (up from 21% in 1999-00), while recent home buyers were also spending more on housing costs (26% of income) compared to the rest of the nation (22%).

The NSW economy has been growing more slowly than the Australian average for the last six years (between 0.2% and 1.9% points behind), and in 2006-07 it had the second slowest growth, at 1.8%.

Other findings include:

Population - Just under a third (33% or 6.89 million) of all Australians lived in NSW, and one in five spoke another language at home.

Income - Over the last five years, household income in NSW has increased by 17%. In 2005-06 the average was \$1,378 per week.

Environment - NSW had the second lowest household water consumption in Australia (84 kilolitres per person) in 2004-05. Households accounted for 10% of all water used in NSW; agriculture used 70%.

Health - Life expectancy in NSW is improving - in 2006 men could expect to live 78.6 years (from 76.4 in 2000) and women 83.4 years (from 81.9).

Labour Force - Unemployment has dropped; from 7.5% in February 1998 to 4.7% in February 2008. There are 8.6 million hours of work potentially being sought by unemployed and underemployed people in NSW.

More details are available in *New South Wales In Focus, June 2008* (cat. no. 1338.1).

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